



Date: Thu, 2 Jun 2005 18:50:20 -0700
To: mcslocal@octopus.wr.usgs.gov
From: "Terry R. Bruns" <tbruns@usgs.gov>
Subject: So Long and Thanks for all the Fish!

Well--maybe I didn't get a lot of fish--but I certainly saw a lot of fishy stuff, so close enough.

After nine years I am finally moving on to something else. Half of you are thinking at this point, "About Bloody Time Too!!!", and the other half are thinking, "Took you long enough!". Me--I'm just thinking, "Free at Last, Free at Last, Thank God Almighty, I'm Free at Last!", while also kind of worrying about, "Be careful what you wish for, you might get it." Sam hinted that I was an institution--I think he was probably saying I should be institutionalized for staying this long.

But--be that as it may, after 9 years, I'm moving on. Some quick thoughts:

1. It's been Interesting: Some things that are worth doing are fun. Most things that are worth doing are not necessarily fun, but they are certainly interesting. This job lies in that category--it has certainly been interesting.
2. The Good: The fun part of the job is the people--so thanks to all of you. The position has allowed me to get to know lots of people both within the team and on other teams, and this has been the best part of the job.
3. The Bad: The Moves. The Space planning. No surprise there.
4. The Team: Always remember that CMG is a team of people working to accomplish goals. Others do not work FOR you, they work WITH you to create solutions. One of my pet peeves is someone who goes out to Marfac or into Admin and expects them to instantly solve a problem, who expects that Marfac or Admin will drop everything to solve their problem right now, because it is the only important one that exists. Wrong--every problem and everyone is important. Always remember that these people are busting their tails to try and accomplish things--and you should bust your tail working alongside them and with them; you should not expect them to do your work for you or to instantly solve your problem.
5. MARFAC: Which brings me to my favorite message: If you even THINK you are going to have a field program that involves Marfac, talk to them as soon as you think about it. The sooner they know, the more they know, the better chances you and they have of making your field program a success. Do not walk in a week before the field program and say, "The tides are better next week, can we change the time?" or "Can we do this new thing by a month from now." Doesn't work. Work with them from the beginning.

6. ADMIN: And the second part of that message: If you even THINK you may have an issue for Admin, things like OFA, budget problems, whatever--talk to them as soon as possible. Or sooner. Do not work up some agreement on your own, then expect admin to get it into the proper format. Start it right from the beginning. Do not do something figuring you can get forgiveness later--this is a great way to cause people a whole lot of extra work. Do not ignore their requests, their pleas for information. Admin is trying to let you do your science--help them do it.



7. On Bureaucratic stupidity and administrivia: Do everyone a favor--when you are asked to do something that is a government-wide requirement, don't fuss about it, don't procrastinate about it, just do it and get it out of the way (safety training for example). You are eventually going to have to do it anyway--and if you wait, it just means someone else is going to have to nag you--someone like me. I don't enjoy nagging people--it takes lots of time, makes my stomach churn, and is not either fun or interesting, just obnoxious. So do what is asked as soon as possible, move on, and let the rest of us move on too.

I'm sure I'll think of a few other things along the way, but that's enough for now. I'm off.

Thanks for everything folks!!

Cheers--Terry

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A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they know they shall never sit.

--Greek proverb
